

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

USUN NEW YORK 141

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EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR XF XI MR

SUBJECT: MAURITANIA--AFRICA'S SPOKESMEN TO THE ARABS

SUMMAR. OULD DADDAH HAS LAUNCHED MAJOR EFFORT TO INCREASE
ARAB WORLD INVOLVEMENT IN BLACK AFRICA.

1. IN COURSE TWO EXTENDED TRIPS DURING PAST SUMMER, MAURITANIAN
FONMIN HAMDY MOUKNASS VISITED VIRTUALLY EVERY CAPITAL IN ARAB
EAST AND NORTH AFRICA ON MISSION DESIGNED BY PRESIDENT OULD
DADDAH TO ENGAGE ARAB WORLD INTEREST IN BLACK AFRICA'S
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT FOR ITS POLITICAL CAUSES.
DISCUSSING HIS MISSION WITH ME EARLIER THISWEEK, MOUKNASS
SAID HE FELT THAT TO DATE IT HAD BEEN LARGELY SUCCESSFUL.

2. OULD DADDAH CONCEIVED MISSION, ACCORDING HIS FONMIN, FOLLOWING
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LAST MAY'S OAU SUMMIT IN WHICH MAURITANIAN PRESIDENT HAD WORKED

HARD TO LINE UP BLACK AFRICAN SUPPORT FOR ARAB POSITIONS, PARTICULARLY RE ISRAELI OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. OULD DADDAH RETURNED HOME CONVINCED THAT ARAB WORLD SHOULD BETTER RECIPROCATE AFRICAN FRIENDSHIP. HE THERE UPON DREW UP LETTERS TO ALL ARAB CHIEFS OF STATE, FOR DELIVERY BY MOUKNASS, WHICH CALLED ON ARABS

- A. TO SEND SPECIAL DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS AROUND BLACK AFRICA EXPRESSING THANKS FOR SUPPORT GIVEN ARAB CAUSE THROUGH OAU;
- B. TO OPEN SOONEST AS MANY DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS AS POSSIBLE IN BLACK AFRICA TO COUNTER EFFORTS OF ISRAELI EMBASSIES AND MAKE ARAB WORLD BETTER KNOWN;
- C. TO ENGAGE FAR MORE WIDELY AND ACTIVELY IN AFRICAN PROGRAMS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. OULD DADDAH SPECIFICALLY INSTRUCTED MOUKNASS TO AVOID ANY HINT HE WAS CANVASSING AID FOR BENEFIT MAURITANIA'S DEVELOPMENT; HE WAS TO TRAVEL AS REP FOR AFRICA.

3. ARAB RESPONSES HAVE ENCOURAGED MAURITANIAN LEADERSHIP TO THINK THAT THEY MAY HAVE BEGUN KNITTING ARABS AND BLACK AFRICANS MORE CLOSELY TOGETHER THAN HAS HERETOFORE BEEN THE CASE. ALL ARAB CHIEFS OF STATE VISITED HAVE NOW REPLIED TO OULD DADDAH. ASIDE FROM AGREEMENT TO MAKE MORE ACTIVE DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS IN AFRICA, THEY INDICATED FOLLOWING RE INCREASED DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION:

- A. ABU DHABI HAS PROPOSED SETTING UP FUND JOINTLY WITH LIBYA FOR AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT. LIBYAN REPLY INCLUDED QADHAFT'S REQUEST THAT OULD DADDAH ("YOU, WHO FIRST INTROUCED ME TO AFRICA. (SIC)) SERVE AS HIS ADVISOR IN SELECTING DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS FOR FINANCING.

- B. KUWAIT AND IRAQ ASSURED HIM THEY WILL WELCOME CHANCE INVEST IN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS. INDEPENDENTLY OF ONE ANOTHER EACH EXPRESSED READINESS MAKE MAJOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO FUND FOR AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT AND PROPOSED SUCH FUND BE SET UP AND ADMINISTERED UNDER ARAB LEAGUE AUSPICES.

- C. FAISAL ASSERTED THAT HE WOULD EXPAND HIS AID TO AFRICA, TELLING MOUKNASS SAG'S AID WOULD REMAIN ON BILATERAL BASIS.

- D. JORDAN, SYRIA AND TUNISIA EACH TOLD MAURITANIAN PRESIDENT THAT WHILE THEIR ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES DID NOT PERMIT THEM TO CONFIDENTIAL

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OFFER GRANTS OR LOANS, THEY WILL EXAMINE SYMPATHETICALLY FURNISHING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO AFRICAN STATES.

- E. EVEN LEBANON, FONMIN NOTED, HAD OFFERED LIMITED CAPITAL ASSISTANCE/INVESTMENT IN ADDITION TO EMPHASIZING ITS ABILITY TO SUPPLY TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.

4. COMMENT. FONMIN WAS EBULLIENT IN DESCRIBING FOREGOING

RESPONSES TO THIS NEW EFFORT OF OULD DADDAH TO EXPAND ON HIS LONGSTANDING ROLE AS MIDDLEMAN BETWEEN BLACK AND ARAB. PRESIDENT ENJOYS PERSONAL DIPLOMACY AND IS GOOD AT IT. TYPICALLY, NOTHING EMERGED FROM OUR DISCUSSION ABOUT PLANS TO INSTITUTIONALIZE ARAB ASSISTANCE, OTHER THAN IRAQI/KUWAITI SUGGESTION OF ARAB LEAGUE INVOLVEMENT, AN ORGANIZATION WHICH MOUKNASS PERSONALLY CONSIDERS MORIBUND.

5. OULD DADDAH'S EFFORT TO PLAY ROLE IN AFRICA AND ON WORLD SCENE GENERALLY GREATER THAN HIS OWN POWER BASE JUSTIFIES IS OF LONG STANDING AND HAS OFTEN PROVED UNREALISTIC. OULD DADDAH DOES, HOWEVER, HAVE KNACK OF TAPPING INTO ARAB WORLD WHERE HE NOT ONLY HAS NO ENEMIES BUT HAS SUCCESSFULLY CULTIVATED FRIENDSHIPS WITH THE WHOLE MIXED BAG OF LEADERS RANGING FROM QADHAFI AND BOUMEDIENE TO THE OIL RICH CONSERVATIVES. IF NOT THE FIRST TO SEEK ARAB INVESTMENT OUTSIDE THE ARAB WORLD, HE MAY TURN OUT TO BE ONE OF THE MORE SUCCESSFUL.
MURPHY

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